

SB34 INTRODUCED



1 SB34
2 I3RGN6W-1
3 By Senator Kitchens
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 13-Jan-26
6 PFD: 17-Dec-25



SYNOPSIS:

This bill would create the Imagination Library of Alabama Program to provide free age-appropriate books to children throughout the state through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to the Department of Early Childhood Education; to create the Imagination Library of Alabama Program to provide free age-appropriate books to children through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library; to require the department to coordinate with a nonprofit entity to operate the program; and to require the department to adopt rules as needed for the administration of the program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) To promote the development of a comprehensive statewide initiative for encouraging preschool age children to develop a love of reading and learning, the Department of Early Childhood Education may develop, fund, support, promote, and operate the Imagination Library of Alabama Program, which is established by this section. For



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purposes of this section, "state program" means the Imagination Library of Alabama Program.

(b) State program funds shall be used to provide, through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, one age-appropriate book, per month, to each registered child from birth to age five in participating counties. Books shall be sent monthly to each registered child's home at no cost to families. Subject to an annual appropriation, the Department of Early Childhood Education shall contribute the state's matching funds per the cost-sharing framework established by Dolly Parton's Imagination Library for the state program. The state program shall contribute the 50 percent match of funds required of local programs participating in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Local program partners shall match the state program funds to provide the remaining 50 percent match of funds required by Dolly Parton's Imagination Library as described in paragraph (2)a.

(1) The Imagination Library of Alabama Fund is created as a special fund in the State Treasury. The Department of Early Childhood Education may accept gifts, grants, awards, donations, matching contributions, appropriations, interest income, public or private bequests, and cost sharings from any individual, business, government, or other third-party source, and any federal funds. All monies received pursuant to this section shall be deposited into the State Treasury to the credit of the Imagination Library of Alabama Fund. Amounts deposited into the fund shall be budgeted and allotted in accordance with Sections 41-4-80 through 41-4-96 and Sections



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41-19-1 through 41-19-12, Code of Alabama 1975. Any monies that are unobligated or unexpended at the end of a fiscal year shall remain in the Imagination Library of Alabama Fund, shall not lapse into the State General Fund, and shall be available to the department for expenditure in the next fiscal year, subject to appropriation.

(2) Monies received pursuant to this section are subject to appropriation by the Legislature and may only be expended for purposes consistent with the conditions under which the monies were received including, but not limited to, the following:

a. Subject to availability, monies in the fund shall be allocated to qualified local entities that provide a dollar-for-dollar match for the program. As used in this section, "qualified local entity" means any existing or new local Dolly Parton's Imagination Library affiliate.

b. Monies in the fund may be used by the Department of Early Childhood Education to pay for administrative expenses of the state program, including associated operating expenses of the department or any nonprofit entity that coordinates the state program pursuant to subsection (c).

(c) The Department of Early Childhood Education shall coordinate with a nonprofit entity qualified under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) to operate the state program. That organization shall be organized solely to promote and encourage reading by the children of this state, for the purpose of implementing this section.

(d) The Department of Early Childhood Education shall



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85 provide oversight of the nonprofit entity that operates the
86 state program pursuant to subsection (c) to ensure the
87 nonprofit entity does all of the following:

88 (1) Promotes the statewide development of local Dolly
89 Parton's Imagination Library programs.

90 (2) Advances and strengthens local Dolly Parton's
91 Imagination Library programs with the goal of increasing
92 enrollment.

93 (3) Develops community engagement.

94 (4) Develops, promotes, and coordinates a public
95 awareness campaign to make donors aware of the opportunity to
96 donate to the affiliate programs and make the public aware of
97 the opportunity to register eligible children to receive books
98 through the program.

99 (5) Administers the local match requirement and
100 coordinates the collection and remittance of local program
101 costs for books and mailing.

102 (6) Develops statewide marketing and communication
103 plans.

104 (7) Solicits donations, gifts, and other funding from
105 statewide partners to financially support local Dolly Parton's
106 Imagination Library programs.

107 (8) Identifies and applies for available grant awards.

108 (e) The Department of Early Childhood Education shall
109 make publicly available on an annual basis information
110 regarding the number of local programs that exist, where the
111 local programs are located, the number of children that are
112 enrolled in the program, the number of books that have been



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113 provided, and the names of those entities or organizations
114 that serve as local partners.

115 (f) The Department of Early Childhood Education may
116 adopt rules as may be needed for the administration of the
117 Imagination Library of Alabama Program.

118 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
119 1, 2026.